

APPENDIX A

Summary of Key Standards for 211 Centers

A. Operational 211 systems are expected to meet the following which have been excerpted from the Standards for Professional Information and Referral published by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS):

1. Ensure the provision of 24-hour coverage, year-round.
2. Ascribe to the AIRS Standards for Information and Referral.
3. Have a plan in place to be accredited by AIRS.
4. Utilize Certified Information and Referral Specialists and Resource Specialists.
5. Demonstrate cooperative relationships with specialized information and referral sources, crisis centers, 911 centers and 311 centers where applicable.
6. Have means of tracking call volume, number of abandoned calls, average speed of answering and average length of calls.
7. Have a computerized information and referral database with client data collection capability.
8. Use the AIRS/INFO LINE Taxonomy of Human Services.
9. Have the ability to publicize 211 services and educate the public on an ongoing basis.
10. Have TTY and multilingual accessibility either on-site or via access to interpreters.
11. Have the ability to develop linkages through protocols with appropriate clearinghouse agencies that may be able to provide services such as volunteer or donations management.
12. Ensure the quality of service and inquirer satisfaction through appropriate follow-up.

B. In states or regions where more than one I&R will be providing 211 services, 211 centers shall have the following which have been excerpted from the Standards for Professional Information and Referral published by the AIRS:

1. An agreed upon plan to work in tandem to ensure that ensure that all areas within a region, state or province have access to 211 services.
2. The ability to share resource data information.
3. The ability to track and share information on client needs.
4. A common means of measuring outcomes for the operation of the call centers.
5. An agreed upon means of communicating with the community represented by the call center regarding requests for assistance, perceived gaps and barriers to service.

C. The following requirements of 211 designees (recommended by the United Way of Dane County) were approved in the Commission's November 20, 2001 Temporary Order with respect to Docket 05-TI-233:

1. Financial capability to cover start-up and on-going expenses.
2. Equipment capability to cover projected increase in calling.
3. Successful experience in providing comprehensive information and referral services.
4. Locally proven collaboration with government, service agencies, and specialized information and referral service providers.
5. Existence of a database that is inclusive and meets criteria established mutually with the state of Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services as part of the Wisconsin Human Service Network Database project.
6. Ability and willingness to provide information and referral services that are confidential and free.
7. Willingness to provide service beyond current service area.
8. Ability to offer service at no cost to callers, other than the cost of having local telephone service.
9. Willingness to work with other information and service providers and organizations to insure a comprehensive statewide 211 network of coverage.
10. Willingness to follow standards for 211 as recommended by the AIRS.